UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General condemns bomb attack in Israel in strongest possible terms; appeals to all sides to continue peace process.

+ Secretary-General meets with Russian Foreign Minister in Geneva; discusses Croatian decision on withdrawal of UNPROFOR, and offers United Nations assistance in Chechnya.

+ Security Council to maintain economic sanctions against Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serbs sign agreement on reopening of Sarajevo Airport routes on 1 February.

+ Multinational Force members say secure and stable environment exists in Haiti; UNMIH should begin assuming full range of functions.

+ French aid worker released in Somalia after 37 days in captivity.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has condemned in the strongest possible terms the bomb attack which occurred near the Israeli town of Netanya, north of Tel Aviv, on Sunday. He expressed regret at the loss of life and injuries caused by that abhorrent act of terrorism.

The Secretary-General extended his condolences to the Government of Israel and the families and colleagues of those killed and wounded in the attack. He also expressed concern over the potential impact on the ongoing peace process, and urged all sides to continue to pursue peace.

Meanwhile, Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Gad Yaacobi, said he expected the international community, the Organization and its Member States to cooperate in dealing with terrorism. He told correspondents at Headquarters that terrorist groups were trying to undermine the Middle East peace process, noting that 110 Israelis had been killed since the signing of the Declaration of Principles by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

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Continuing his stay in Geneva, the Secretary-General met this morning, in the presence of Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information Samir Sanbar, with 14 Directors of United Nations Information Centres in Europe and Africa. Among his other appointments were meetings with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata; United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Jose Ayala Lasso; and his Special Envoy for Georgia, Edouard Brunner. Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will meet with his principal aides on the situation in the former Yugoslavia, focusing on Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

On Saturday, the Secretary-General met with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. They discussed the situation in Croatia, including possible avenues to be pursued following that country's decision on the withdrawal of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). The Secretary-General stated that he and the Foreign Minister believed that that course of action would "be a disaster for the peace process in the former Yugoslavia".

The Secretary-General also discussed the situation in Chechnya with Foreign Minister Kozyrev, and offered United Nations assistance there. He cited the Organization's ability to help in the promotion of democracy and the delivery of humanitarian aid.

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The Security Council has said it will maintain the economic sanctions imposed on Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina by resolution 942 (1994). In a statement to correspondents, President Emilio Cardenas (Argentina) said Council members were in agreement on the absence of the conditions required to modify or reconsider that resolution.

In resolution 942 (1994), the Council strongly condemned the Bosnian Serbs for refusing to accept the territorial settlement proposed by the Contact Group, and said the sanctions would be reconsidered if they did so. The sanctions apply to "all activities of an economic nature", but the Council permitted exceptions on humanitarian grounds.

The Council President went on to announce that the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serbs had signed an agreement for the reopening of the Sarajevo Airport routes on 1 February. Meanwhile, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) reported that the Bosnian Government had ended its blockade in Tuzla. The blockade had prevented the Force from supporting aid deliveries by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

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A secure and stable environment now exists in Haiti and the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) should begin assuming the full range of its functions, according to the States members of the Multinational Force. In a letter to the Security Council dated 19 January, they said all of the goals

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set out in resolution 940 (1994), and more, had been accomplished. They also endorsed a report to that effect by the Commander of the Multinational Force.

In a related development, the Secretary-General has informed the Council that UNMIH's military component will be composed of contingents from the following Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Canada, Djibouti, France, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, India, Ireland, Jamacia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and the United States. In a letter dated 19 January, he noted that he was awaiting replies from certain other States which had been informally approached regarding troop contributions.

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Somali gunmen have freed Rudy Marq, the French aid worker kidnapped in Mogadishu last month, according to a spokesman for the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). Mr. Marq was flown to Nairobi after his release, having spent 37 days in captivity.

United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations in Somalia had suspended non-emergency operations earlier this month to pressure Somali leaders to secure Mr. Marq's release.

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